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SUBJECT: JCIC-XXXII: RUSSIAN NON PAPER ON B-1 CONVERSION,
JULY 24, 2008

Classified By: Jerry A. Taylor, United States
Representative to the Joint Compliance and Inspection
Commission. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is JCIC-XXXII-026.

¶2. (U) Paragraph 3 below contains the text of the official
translation of a Russian Non-Paper, dated July 24, 2008, on
the "U.S. Conversion of B-1 Heavy Bombers to a Non-Nuclear
Variant." The non-paper refers to photographs that were
taken during an inspection on January 19, 2008. The
photographs cannot be included in this reporting cable and
have been e-mailed to Washington (State/VCI/SI).

¶3. (S) Begin text:

Official Translation

Non-Paper of the
Russian Federation
July 24, 2008

On U.S. Conversion of B-1 Heavy Bombers to
a Non-Nuclear Variant
(Materials Presented by the Russian Side at the
Working Group Meeting on July 22, 2008, during JCIC-XXXII)

The Russian side is presenting the text of the briefing
on the topic of U.S. conversion of B-1 heavy bombers (HBs)
equipped for nuclear armaments other than long-range nuclear
ALCMs into HBs equipped for non-nuclear armaments.

First, we consider it necessary to remind you of some of
the provisions of the Treaty and its associated documents and
then to assess the results of the inspections conducted under
Article XI, paragraph 8, of the Treaty.

We will begin by enumerating certain facts, which we
will take into account later on.

- The conversion of heavy bombers is regulated by the START Treaty, and in fulfillment of its obligations under the Coordinated Statement of March 24, 2004, the U.S. informed the Treaty Parties of its plans to modify the pylon attachment joints and its overall plans for conversion of B-1 heavy bombers (Russia received this document, No. MFA/140/07 from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, on November 2, 2007).
- The Conversion or Elimination Protocol and the Inspection Protocol provide for verification (through inspections under Article XI, paragraph 8, of the Treaty) of compliance with the terms and the declared conversion procedures.

We will respond to the following questions: what is the (begin underline) objective of, and what are the terms and procedures for (end underline) conversion?

Declared U.S. Objective (underlined).

To convert a B-1 heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments other than long-range nuclear ALCMs into a heavy bomber equipped for non-nuclear armaments.

Terms. (underlined)

The first and most important one is set forth in Section VI, paragraph 11, of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol: "A heavy bomber must be converted so that (begin underline) it is no longer (end underline) equipped for nuclear armaments."

Important Point. (underlined)

Russia proceeds from the understanding that the words (begin underline) "is no longer equipped" (end underline) mean that it will be impossible in the future to change the conversion objective that has been achieved (i.e. to return the bomber to its former status).

The (begin underline) conversion procedures (end underline) (Section VI, paragraph 11, of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol) stipulate that all weapons bays equipped for nuclear armaments shall be modified so as to render them incapable of carrying nuclear armaments. All external attachment joints for nuclear armaments and all external attachment joints for pylons for nuclear armaments shall be removed or modified so as to render them incapable of carrying nuclear armaments.

The conversion procedures are defined and declared by the U.S. in the relevant notifications.

Verification that these declared procedures have been carried out is provided by the relevant type of inspection (Article XI, paragraph 8, of the START Treaty).

Let's look at the results of the inspections conducted and assess them from the standpoint of the possibility of verifying and confirming that the procedures and terms for conversion have been carried out and that the ultimate objective of the conversion has been achieved.

Using as an example the first inspection, which took place on January 19, 2008, we will look at the results obtained. The results of all of the subsequent ten inspections of converted B-1 HBs were analogous.

Let's recall the salient points from the pre-inspection procedures. The U.S. escorts declared the modification of the weapons bays and pylon attachment joints and listed additional arguments confirming, in the inspected Party's view, the non-nuclear status of the B-1 heavy bomber:

- the B-1 heavy bomber has not carried nuclear weapons since 1997;

- the infrastructure of B-1 bases does not support the maintenance of nuclear weapons;

- software for nuclear weapons is not supported on the B-1 heavy bomber;

- flight and technical staff are not being trained in the use and maintenance of nuclear weapons.

Clearly, none of the information listed can be used in the context of the START Treaty provisions.

In this connection, the Russian inspection team leader stated that these additional arguments had nothing to do with the START Treaty provisions and asked the following question:

will the elements removed from the B-1 heavy bomber be presented to the inspection team?

The answer to this question was: no, they will not, and all the removed elements have been eliminated.

Let's turn to the official inspection report.

Ambiguity No. 1. (underlined)

The inspected Party declared that two objects which it considers to be cable connectors for nuclear armaments had been removed from each of the weapons bays, i.e. the forward, middle and aft weapons bays. The objects removed were not presented to the inspecting Party. It is not clear to the inspecting Party whether and where these objects were removed and whether this procedure is consistent with the objective stipulated in Section VI, paragraph 11, of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol.

Photograph reflecting Ambiguity No. 1.

(Photograph in Russian text.)

The inspectors saw that in the location of two cable connectors there were cannon plugs glued on. The cable connectors that had been removed were not presented (i.e. the inspectors did not have an opportunity to reliably confirm the fact of their removal). The cable network that goes to the box on which the connectors are located remained unchanged (this is evident if one compares the photographs of the forward weapons bay of the B-1 heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments other than long-range nuclear ALCMs), which is illustrated by the photograph (all cables are in place).

The inspectors observed the very same situation in the middle and aft weapons bays.

(Two photographs in Russian text.)

The cable network also remained unchanged. As before, a multipurpose rotary launcher, which, in turn, is capable of carrying nuclear aerial bombs, can be placed in the weapons bays.

Results of declared conversion of the three weapons bays: (underlined)

Taking into account that:

- the cable network in the weapons bays was unchanged;

- it was not shown how the cables attached to the connector box terminated;

- the removed connectors for nuclear armaments were not presented; and

- the possibility remains for installing a rotary launcher capable of carrying nuclear weapons in the weapons bays, the inspectors concluded that the modification of the weapons bays carried out by the U.S. does not meet the requirements of Section VI, paragraph 11, of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol and that (begin underline, bolded text. for the heavy bomber bays the objective of the conversion was not achieved. (end underline, bolded text)

This has prompted the Russian Federation's concern, i.e. that the modification of the weapons bays should be (begin underline. more thorough and irreversible. (end underline; para in bold text.)

In the U.S. response of May 28, 2008, to Russia's Aide-Memoire of February 15, 2008, the U.S. informed us that such modification of the weapons bays (which consists in using cannon plugs to "seal" the sockets for the cable connections) ensures they are "unsuited for the (begin underline. operational deployment end underline.) of nuclear armaments." Let's recall that the Treaty does not contain the concept, the term, or the criteria (including time criteria) for operational deployment of nuclear armaments.

Let's turn to the pylon attachment joints.

Ambiguity No. 2. (underlined)

The inspected Party stated that objects which it considers to be collet receptacles for nuclear armaments were removed from the forward and aft pylon attachment joints. The objects removed were not presented to the inspecting Party. It is not clear to the inspecting Party whether and where these objects were removed and whether this procedure meets the objective stipulated in Section VI, paragraph 11, of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol.

The inspection team was shown the forward attachment joint, as follows.

(Photograph in Russian text.)

The inspection team was faced with the following question: was it modified?

As you know, in the past the inspectors never observed an attachment joint prior to modification (it was closed off by covers). Now the removed elements are not being presented to the inspectors for purposes of comparison. That is a statement of fact.

Question. On the basis of what can the inspection team conclude that this joint is not compatible with a nuclear ALCM pylon? It would seem that there is no basis for doing so. In this connection, the inspection team declared Ambiguity No. 2.

In addition, it should be noted that on July 10, 2008, the Russian Federation conducted an inspection at Davis-Monthan under Article XI, paragraph 3, of the Treaty. From the results of that inspection, it was found that on one B-1 heavy bomber (No. 84055) equipped for nuclear armaments (which had been partially disassembled) one pylon attachment joint for long-range nuclear ALCMs was in plain view. The Russian inspectors were surprised that it looked (begin underline. exactly the same as the modified forward attachment joint. (end underline)

Ambiguity No. 3 concerns the aft pylon attachment joints.

The inspected Party presented the aft pylon attachment joints to the inspecting Party with cylindrical metal sleeves welded to the inside wall of the well. However, it is not clear to the inspecting Party how this procedure corresponds to the objective stipulated in Section VI, paragraph 11, of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol.

Let's look at the photograph taken by the inspectors.

(Photograph in Russian text.)

(begin underline) In the past (end underline) the inspectors (begin underline) never observed (end underline) the "old" joints, and photographs of them were not provided to the Treaty Parties. The collet receptacles that were declared to have been removed were not presented. It is not clear that the welded sleeve precludes the possibility of attaching a pylon for nuclear ALCMs.

In notification ANC/STR 08-53/90 of January 26, 2008, the U.S. stated (begin bold type) "that all the attachment joints have been changed so as to be incompatible with long-range nuclear ALCM pylons, but this was not demonstrated either during the HB exhibition or during conversion inspections." (end bold type) (Translator's Note: Retranslation from Russian.)

The inspection team did not confirm that the objective of conversion had been achieved as regards the pylon attachment joints.

The circumstances listed do not allow the inspectors at each conversion inspection to confirm the fact that a B-1 heavy bomber has been converted to a non-nuclear variant.

The inspection report (summary comments): "The inspecting Party did not confirm the fact that the inspected Party had completed the procedures for conversion of the B-1B heavy bomber equipped for nuclear armaments other than long-range nuclear ALCMs into a heavy bomber equipped for non-nuclear armaments because, in the inspecting Party's view, the modification of the weapons bays and external pylon attachment joints that was carried out (begin underline) is not sufficient (end underline) to render them (begin underline) incapable of carrying nuclear armaments." (end underline)

For the above reasons, the inspected Party's answers contained in the reports of conversion inspections and in the U.S. paper of May 28, 2008, (begin underline) cannot satisfy (end underline) the Russian side.

Thus, the Russian side (begin underline) has the following concern: (end underline) (begin bold text) "The procedures declared by the U.S. for conversion of a B-1 heavy bomber to a non-nuclear variant do not conform to the requirements of the Conversion or Elimination Protocol. The Russian Federation believes that after conversion the B-1 is still capable of carrying nuclear armaments." (end bold text)

End text.

¶4. (U) Taylor sends.
TICHENOR

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End Cable Text